

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 16 and 17 were rejected in a Final Office Action dated March 3, 2009. Claim 6 has been editorially amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 USC §102

Claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Specifically, it was stated in the Office Action that Ogata teaches a laminated cloth having a plastic film that is bonded to the rear of the denim base cloth (equated to Applicants' back textile) via a water-insoluble adhesive layer and a lining of cotton cloth (equated to Applicants' face textile).

Applicants respectfully submit that this characterization of Ogata et al is inaccurate. Specifically, Ogata et al. discloses in, for example, claim 1 that "a laminated cloth place for jeans having stuck a plastic film on the reverse side of a denim base fabric via a nonaqueous solubility adhesive layer, and sticking lining cloth in the surface of the plastic film concerned via a water soluble adhesive layer further." It is apparent that the lining cloth is being equated to the back textile of the present invention. The denim base cloth used for the invention of Ogata et al. is thick-twilled cotton cloth used for jeans (0007 of Ogata) and it is equated to the face textile of the present invention.

The present invention, as defined in present claim 1, is of a laminated fabric, characterized in having a structure where a temporary adhesive layer is used to laminate a front-surface fabric on one side of a durable film, and permanent adhesive layer is used to laminate a rear-surface fabric on the remaining side of the durable film, while Ogata et al. has a structure in which a plastic film is bonded to the back-surface of a denim foundation via a water-insoluble adhesive and a rear-surface fabric is bonded to the opposite side of this plastic film with a water-soluble adhesive. In short, they are different from each other on the point that in Claim 1, a front-surface fabric and a durable film are laminated via a temporary adhesive such as water-soluble adhesive, whereas in Ogata et al., a denim foundation as the front-surface fabric and a plastic film are laminated via a water-insoluble adhesive (equivalent to durable adhesive). With respect to claim 8, applicants submit that since it depends from claim it, it is also novel over Ogata et al. for the reasons stated above.

By employing the structure of Claim 1, as mentioned below, remarkable effects that cannot be obtained with the Ogata et al. structure can be gained.

1. As the used amount of the permanent adhesive is small, a laminated fabric is excellent in light-weight property and is flexible without changing the hand of the front-surface fabric. In the Ogata et al. structure, on the other hand, when a fabric with high denier fiber, large-mass fabric, fabrics with structures such as twill weave and check, or fashionable or fancy fabrics (such as jacquard weave) are used for the front-surface fabric, the irregularity of a fabric surface to be bonded increases. In order to firmly bond a plastic film and such a front-surface fabric with sufficient bonding strength, a large amount of water-insoluble adhesive is needed. This stiffens the hand of the resulting laminated fabric, consequently making it difficult to obtain the effects of softening the hand. Also, increasing the amount of adhesive to be applied during lamination will lead to greater material costs.

2. As a rear-surface fabric is fixed to a durable film, even when a light-weight rear-surface fabric is used, damages due to washing and the like to the fabric can be avoided, allowing a rear-surface fabric to be selected from a wider range of fabrics. In the Ogata et al. structure, after sewing, the water-soluble adhesive is removed from the laminated rear-surface fabric during water-rinsing, and the laminated rear-surface fabric becomes a single structure after it is peeled from the plastic film. In this case, to prevent thread slippage due to wearing and washing, it is necessary to conduct the resin process, such as acrylic-resin coating or treatments using a slippage prevention agent, in advance, or to increase the density of the rear-surface fabric.

Such treatments not only narrow the choice for the rear-surface fabric but also increase the cost of the fabric itself. In addition, there will arise many disadvantages such as a larger mass of the fabric, lower moisture permeability, compromised hand and touch, and others.

3. As a front-surface fabric is washed in the condition that it is peeled from a durable film, the laminated fabric has excellent easy-clean property. In the Ogata et al. structure, a front-surface fabric and a plastic film are always closely attached because they are laminated together via a water-insoluble adhesive, so

once the front-surface fabric is contaminated, when washed, the plastic film hampers a washing solution including a detergent penetrating the front-surface fabric. Therefore, in some cases, dirt that could easily be removed if the front-surface fabric were a single fabric cannot come off easily, or remains as a stain between the front-surface fabric and the plastic film. Moreover, after a long hour of washing to remove dirt, the abrasion on the clothing increases, so the lifetime of the clothing decreases.

4. It is possible to have waterproof processing using a seam-sealing tape. In the Ogata et al. structure, as a rear-surface fabric is peeled from a plastic film due to water-rinsing, there is a problem that the seam-sealing process cannot be performed.

5. A front-surface fabric can be peeled off, so there is excellent material cyclic property. In the Ogata et al. structure, a rear-surface fabric is separated from a plastic film in the first place, so it can be easily recycled, but a front-surface fabric with higher mass ratio than that of the rear-surface fabric and the plastic film are firmly bonded together via a water-insoluble adhesive, so they cannot be easily separated. As a result, higher recycle of materials becomes difficult.

In view of the comments provided above, applicants submit that claims 1 and 8 are novel over Ogata et al. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn.

II. The Claims Are Neither Disclosed Nor Suggested by the Cited

References

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lumb et al. (US 5,204,156) in view of Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854). Claims 2-5 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lumb et al. (US 5,204,156) in view of Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854), and further in view of Takahiro et al. (JP 2002-20916). Furthermore, Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lumb et al. (US 5,204,156) in view of Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854) and further in view of Wiedner et al. (US 5,461,724). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

It was stated in the Office Action that with respect to Lumb et al., Lumb teaches "a stretchable, drapeable, windproof, water resistant and water vapor

permeable composite fabric (equated to applicants' laminated fabric)", that the laminated fabric of Lumb includes an inner fabric layer 16 (equated to face textile) and an outer fabric layer 22 (equated to back textiles) that are bonded to a waterproof moisture vapor permeable barrier layer (abstract) using adhesive layer(s) 15." Further, it was stated that the "adhesive of Lumb can be formed of polyurethane (column 5 lines 1-11) which is equated to the water-insoluble adhesive." It was further stated that Lumb is silent as to teaching the inner fabric layer (face textile) is laminated with a temporary adhesive layer. Ogata et al. is relied on for this teaching.

Applicants respectfully submit that the characterization of the teachings of Lumb et al and Ogata et al are incorrect. Specifically, the inner fabric layer 16 indicated by Lumb et al. is equated to face textile and the outer fabric layer 22 is equated to back textile, but this characterization of Lumb et al. is inaccurate. Specifically, it is taught in lines 47-51 and 66-68 of column 4 of Lumb et al. that the inner fabric layer 16 is equated to the back textile of the present invention and the outer fabric layer 22 is equated to the face textile of the present invention. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Lumb et al. and Ogata et al. do not disclose, suggest or render obvious any of claims 1, 2, 6-8, 16 and 17.

Moreover, with respect to the further rejection of claims 2-5 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lumb et al. (US 5,204,156) in view of Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854), and further in view of Takahiro et al. (JP 2002-20916), applicants respectfully submit that Takahiro is relied on for the teaching of a porous PTFE film as noted in the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the teachings of Takahiro do not overcome the significant limitations of Lumb et al and Ogata et al, describe earlier herein, to render obvious claims 2-5. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Further, with respect to the further rejection of claims 6 and 7 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lumb et al. (US 5,204,156) in view of Ogata et al. (JP 05-031854), and further in view of Wiedner et al. (U.S. 5,461,724) applicants respectfully submit that Wiedner is relied on for the teaching of an inner layer having a lighter design than the outer layer, as noted in the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the teachings of Wiedner et al. do not overcome the significant limitations of Lumb et al and Ogata et al.,

describe earlier herein, to render obvious claims 6 and 7. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion:

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-8 and 16-17 are now in form for allowance. If further questions remain, applicant requests that the Examiner telephone applicant's undersigned representative before issuing a further Office Action.

Respectfully submitted,



Carol A. Lewis White, 33,306
W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc.
551 Paper Mill Road
P.O. Box 9206
Newark, DE 19714-9206
(302) 738-4880

Date: September 3, 2009